

STATINTL

OFF-BROADWAY

Peace Prize Brewing a

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Gossip in Gotham

PRESIDENT KENNEDY has made Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt this country's nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize—and she would seem likely to win it in a walk—but Senator Fulbright's supporters have persuaded another important figure on the New Frontier to break precedent and nominate the lawmaker from Arkansas.

Party War

Keep CIA free of politics

The suggestion of Sen. J. William Fulbright that a Senate-House committee be set up to ride herd on certain enterprises of the Central Intelligence Agency carries with it overtones that do not bode well for future espionage activities of the United States.

Ideally, of course, it is well for the elected representatives of the people to constantly supervise the various agencies answerable to the federal government. But it is questionable, it seems to us, whether it would be wise to permit so many outsiders to be let in on the innermost secrets of America's most secret organization, or to control its timetable.

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Congressmen are notoriously poor secret-keepers. Almost without exception, testimony given in closed sessions of congressional committees eventually finds itself being circulated and as having come from what may be considered an "unimpeachable source."

Behind the Arkansas senator's suggestion is his argument that even though Francis Gary Powers appears to be exonerated by the CIA as having fulfilled both his contract to the CIA and his obligation to his government, the U2 pilot's ill-fated flight over the Soviet Union should never have been permitted to have been undertaken when it was. Fulbright contends that too much was at stake — the Paris summit conference — to have taken a chance of upsetting relations between the U.S. and USSR.

Thus, he argues, Powers' flight should have been delayed for a more propitious time.

We are told by CIA, however, the day selected for Powers' flight was determined by the weather, which cleared over Russia and permitted the cameras on the U2 to record the information the CIA was striving to obtain. Too, we recall at the time that great speculation was raised that Premier Khrushchev, as had been the case in the past, would attempt some spectacular space effort just prior to the Paris parley. The point was later made that the CIA was interested in learning if this was to come about, and from what site an attempt might be launched. Powers' job was to find out — and before the summit meeting.

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Sen. Fulbright's concern for peace between the United States and Russia is understandable. But espionage cannot always be delayed to suit the fancy of diplomats, nor, for that matter, their schedules.

In the case of Gary Powers, the abortive flight blew the Paris parley to smithereens. But it could have been that any of almost a score of previous U2 flights across Russia could have ended in a crash and in a disruption of the then budding "friendship" between President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev.

Would Sen. Fulbright have held up our efforts to gain access to Russian secrets all during that time?

We would hope not.